



State of Arizona
Department of Education

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Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Dear Members of the Legislature:

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is required by law to submit an annual report summarizing the state's programs on behalf of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. These programs are called bilingual education and English as a Second Language (ESL).

Our goal is to ensure that all Arizona students, regardless of primary language, have equal access to an extraordinary education. Arizona is a diverse state with over 200,000 K-12 students whose primary home language is something other than English. We believe very strongly that our schools must be committed to bringing all LEP students to a level where they can read and write proficiently in English at the earliest possible date. The fact that LEP students currently score 20 percentage points below native speakers of English on achievement tests reinforces the necessity of ensuring that reading and writing proficiency in English is the top educational priority for these students.

All of the information in the English Acquisition Services Report is self-reported by school districts, individual schools and public charter schools. In some cases schools and districts reported conflicting information, causing confusion and making analysis difficult. While the ADE English Acquisition unit cannot validate all of the information submitted, the unit does attempt to verify submissions that appear to be inaccurate or out of proportion. What will make the report and subsequent data collection and analysis significantly more reliable is the submission of student level data through the Student Accountability Information System (SAIS).

The report contains several detailed sections, broken down by district and school. These sections illustrate home language figures, reassessment numbers, achievement tests, program participation and staffing, funding and reporting compliance. Though not all districts and charter schools complied with the requirement to submit data, non-submitting districts and charter represented less than one percent of Arizona's students.

The Arizona Department of Education, while not making specific policy recommendations in this report, believes that program reform is essential. For this past school year, less than 15 percent of LEP students tested for reclassification were declared proficient in English; less than 6 percent of all LEP students were declared proficient in English. If we believe in providing an extraordinary education for all students and that raising student achievement levels is important, we must put some action behind these words.